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NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY

2019



BE IMITATORS OF ME, AS I AM OF CHRIST. NOW I COMMEND YOU
BECAUSE YOU REMEMBER ME IN EVERYTHING AND MAINTAIN THE
TRADITIONS EVEN AS I DELIVERED THEM TO YOU.

St. Paul commends the Corinthians on maintaining the traditions he taught. I am often pleasantly surprised when a visitor to our parish (someone looking for a new church home, someone visiting for the first time) commends us: *I can't believe you still do THAT. It brings back so many memories.*

Those words are never spoken in any negative way, but in admiration, real commendation. What we do in church brings back memories, family, place, belonging, and home. We make it real. Tradition, for us and for our visitors, is more than sets of actions, it is a deep connection to life in Christ's body.

It is wonderful that our connection with traditional liturgical practice, keeping the traditions delivered to us, warms hearts and makes them feel connected to something far greater and much deeper.

If you study 'church conflicts' you would often see battle lines drawn between tradition and liberalism. The wars and conflicts typically

center on things most people would consider minutia, little details that may be important on a technical level, but would not be worth dying over. Yet so much drama... Yet, we are spared because we live tradition holistically.

What is commendable about what we do is that we maintain what is essentially important. It is not liturgical tradition alone, but tradition in every sense, wholly.

We have a tradition of charity and openness that lives in the way we welcome. We imitate the apostles, and are willing to be disciples of Christ. That shows in the way we proclaim Him, make Him known, and invite all to join with us in knowing, loving, and serving Jesus.

This year we work to grow in our discipling of Jesus. We try to be more like Him. Then let us appreciate the commendation we have received. We live the very words Paul also wrote to the Thessalonians: *stand firm, hold to the traditions that you were taught.*

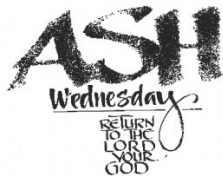
WAIT, WHEN'S LENT?

Usually, the first few paragraphs of the February newsletter discuss Lenten events. Lenten rules are laid out. Lenten practices are commended to us. Lenten activities fill the calendar. Not this year! This year, Lent begins on March 6th. So stay tuned for our March newsletter. In the interim, make good use of the pre-Lenten season that begins February 17th.

Our Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held on Sunday, February 3rd. There will be one Holy Mass that day at 10:30am. Breakfast will be served. Please make an effort to attend and commit to the work laid out for us.

Ok - Ash Wednesday Preview



Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, March 6th. Holy Mass with the blessing and distribution of ashes will take place at 7pm that day. Please join us.

The Outrageous Valentine's Raffle

February 2019 – the month of love. Thank you to all who purchased and donated tickets for our Outrageous Valentine's Raffle. Your generosity and support helps our young people attend the annual KURS summer encampment and CONVO 2020.

We wish you the best of luck this month. We will send winners their checks right away and will announce all the winners in March's newsletter.

Our Annual Financial Meeting - March 3rd

Our annual financial meeting will be held on Sunday, March 3rd. There will be one Holy Mass that day at 10:30am. Breakfast will be served. Please attend and help decide on our financial matters.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY

For the 18th year in a row, our parish is participating in the Souper Bowl of Caring. Through the Souper Bowl of Caring we are providing food help for those in need in our local community. We ask for your support and deeply appreciate your generosity!

Your monetary donations in church on Super Bowl Sunday – February 3rd will support the work of

Schenectady Community Ministries.

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in. — Matthew 25:35

Milestones to Celebrate:

Birthdays

2 Christine Spooner, Jean Martin
5 Suzanne Heins
9 Christine Caden
11 Bob Shufelt, Justice Smith,
Joseph Ruchalski
12 Kristen Smith-Prusky
16 Celina Maliszewski
18 Paul Podkulski
20 Kelly Supinski, Lisa Kaminski
21 Casey Carroll
28 Patrick Clas

Wedding Anniversaries

17 Tom & Kelly Supinski
18 Stefan & Elizabeth Węglinski
26 Michael & Kimberly DonVito

Wishing you all many years!

**Thank you, Merci, Dziękuję,
Āčiū, Gracias, Mahalo, Grazie!**



To all who assisted in the taking down of our Christmas decorations.

To our wonderful altar servers, our organist and choir

director Liz Battaglia, and to all who supplied our ministry of hospitality.

To the one family who welcomed me

to their home for Epiphany visitations/Kolęda. Your hospitality and graciousness are greatly appreciated. You are a blessing.

To all who continue to pray, sacrifice, and serve in Christian love and charity on behalf of our parish.

To every parishioner, visitor, and member -- you are a blessing, a treasure, and a joy!

Epiphany Visitations - Kolęda - House Blessings

Fr. Jim is available to come to your homes for the traditional Epiphany home blessing. Please see him to make an appointment.

Thus far, only one family has invited me to their home. I pray that every family recognize the need for Jesus' blessing on their home. With God's blessing everything is easier.

Blessing appointments are available through March 5th (prior to Ash Wednesday).

To prepare your home for the blessing please have the blessed chalk and incense available as well as your blessed candle (gromnica).

Please Help - Basket Social - March 31st

It is time to get ready for our annual basket social. We really need your help to make this year's Social a success. Can you donate a

basket, or two, or three? They don't have to be huge - anything will do. Through your love and charity we are able to touch the lives of others and maintain a vibrant faith community. Need ideas - check out Pinterest: <http://pinterest.com/cm1953/basket-party-ideas/>

SOCL News, Confirmation, first Communion

Be sure to bring your children for School of Christian living classes every week. Class is also available for adults who have not made confirmation.

Planning For —

Holy Mass each week at 9:30 and 11:30 am unless otherwise noted.

- Feb. 2: Solemnity of the Presentation. Holy Mass at 10am with Blessing of Candles.
- Feb. 3: 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Holy Mass at 10:30am with Blessing of Throats. Breakfast and Annual Meeting.
- Feb. 10: 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Feb. 14: Commemoration - St. Valentine.
- Feb. 16: 66th Anniversary of the death of S+P Prime Bishop Francis Hodur.
- Feb. 17: Septuagesima Sunday.

- Feb. 18: President's Day. Holy Mass for Healing at 6:15pm.
- Feb. 24: Sexagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 11:30am ONLY.
- Feb. 25: Feast of St. Matthias, Apostle (translated).
- Mar. 3: Quinquagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 10:30am ONLY. Breakfast and Annual Financial Meeting.
- March 4: Commemoration of St. Casimir.
- Mar. 6: Ash Wednesday. Holy Mass with blessing and distribution of ashes at 7pm.

FOR LOVE

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." — John 13:34-35

Prayer for St. Valentine's Day

Most Gracious Heavenly Father, You gave Saint Valentine the courage to witness to the gospel of Christ, even to the point of giving his life for it. Help us to endure all suffering for love of you, and to seek you with all our hearts; for you alone are the source of life and love. Grant that we may have the courage and



love to be strong witnesses of your truth to our friends and family and to the whole world. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Financial Security?

The PNUA and Spójnia Credit Union offer great tools for financial management. If you are considering getting your financial house in order in 2019 contract the PNUA and SCU. Remember too that PNUA policies make great gifts for newlyweds and infants. Call the PNUA office at 1-800-724- 6352 or see Fr. Jim.

Music Scholarship Applications

A special collection was accepted on January 27th to benefit the National United Choir's Music Scholarship Fund. These scholarships are available to any parishioner of our denomination who is taking music lessons. This is with the hope that as these musicians continue to advance they will share their musical talent with the church. If any parishioner is studying music, consider applying for a scholarship. Applications and information are available through Cathy Bilinski at nucscholarship@gmail.com or online at <http://nucmusicscholarship.weebly.com>. The Church has provided 1,095

scholarships totaling over \$316,985. 2019 Scholarships applications must be submitted no later than May 1, 2019.

Year of Discipleship Update

This month it is suggested that we organize and attend some type of informal, faith-based discussion gathering for adults within our parish or cluster of parishes. Some suggestions for what this setting might be are: Soup, Sandwich, and Sermon; Wine and Spirits; Potluck Dinner and Discussion; Book Club and Bubbly....and you get the idea.

As some may shy away from either organizing or attending something like this – something that might take us out of our usual comfort zone, below are some suggestions to consider and will hopefully help you to say YES to trying to hold a gathering as we are all called to Discipleship: 2019:

1. Prevent the thought of trying something new from overwhelming you or others in your parish by focusing on just doing this ONCE to begin with. Don't worry about building out a whole schedule for these gatherings. Just plan the first one and then see what happens. Build from there.
2. TRY IT one time. To try just once should be the universal theme whenever we are presented with something different or new. How many times have we attempted to get a child to try a new food, or convinced our spouse to try a new restaurant? This is no different. No one is asking for a lifetime commitment of your Friday evenings here...just one.

3. Construct a setting that can help people to visualize that this will be something different and not the same old same old, we've tried this before, been there done that, church thing. If you can, create a casual setting in your church hall using comfortable chairs, accent tables, an area rug, plants and flowers or whatever you have available, to coincide with when you introduce the idea of this gathering. Let people see that the setting will be something different and more relaxed.

4. Gather input from others in the parish about when to have this gathering and what the format might be. Introduce a short survey one Sunday and ask the adults to complete the anonymous survey during coffee hour. Use this information to help determine the best date/time for your first event, asking just a few simple questions, such as:

- Will you attend the Wine and Spirits, faith-based discussion gathering? Y/N
- If yes, which of the following dates/times work best for you? Give two to three specific options and then include an "other" option and let them fill in the blank.
- If you will not attend, can you provide some insight as to why not? For example, work schedule, no transportation, on vacation.
- Do you have any suggestions for this type of gathering?

5. If childcare may be an issue in getting some of the adults in your parish to commit to even one time, consider having the kids come along and they can watch a movie together in another room.

6. Once a date and time is finalized, continue to promote this event. Email the parishioners with friendly reminders as

the event approaches. Send out a postcard reminder such as a "Save the Date" kind of thing. Make a big deal about this gathering, reminding people how important their participation is.

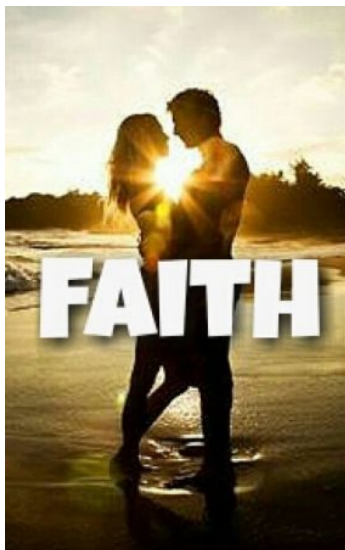
Is God Out of Touch When It Comes to Sex?

By Chip Ingram

I think many people – even Christians – think that God is totally out of touch with today's culture and

people's needs and that's why He prohibits all sex outside of marriage.

I know I did. I came to Christ after my senior year in high school. Then I went away to a college where there



were four girls for every guy. It was the early-to-mid 1970s and everyone was sleeping with everyone, so temptation was everywhere.

As I started growing and reading my Bible, I came across all these crazy rules that said, "Do not do this..." and "Do not do that..." It felt like a great big fence that was preventing me from getting all the good stuff of life. And I just remember thinking, "God is just the biggest cosmic

killjoy in the world!"

Have you ever thought that or heard someone say that to you?

Here's the truth: God prohibits all immoral behavior outside of marriage because of His desire to protect you.

Romans 6:23 says, *"For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life."*

The wages of doing something wrong sexually is death. And in Scripture, death isn't just physical death. Death is separation. When our first parents sinned, they didn't fall over dead. They were separated from God.

Sexual immorality, whether it's visual, mental, or physical, puts a barrier between us and Him.

What I learned is that God's heart isn't about preventing us from experiencing all the good stuff like sex. The Spirit of God showed me that instead of a fence that stood in the way of me getting all the good stuff, it was actually a guardrail.

It was like God was putting his arm around me and saying, "Chip, I love you. I just want to keep you inside the guardrail so you get first-rate sex. I want you to have sex without guilt. I want you to have sex without shame. I don't want you to have sex with flashbacks. I want you to get the highest – the best!

The guardrail is to protect you. And it's also to provide for you.

What many of us fail to realize is

that God knows our needs. After all, He's the One who created us with the hormones that we have! He knows the longings of our hearts and understands our loneliness.

God's warning against sexual immorality isn't to take away our joy. It's the exact opposite. He wants to give us sexual fulfillment, emotional peace, and reward our life with the very best.

If you'd like to explore this topic more in depth, take a look at Chip Ingram's series "Culture Shock" and "Love, Sex, and Lasting Relationships."

Why the Environment Matters to God

By Chip Ingram

There are few topics that cause as much controversy and polarizing opinions as the environment. When someone asks what you think of the environment and the issues surrounding it, sometimes it just feels easier to avoid the conversation altogether.

But as awkward and difficult as it is, followers of Jesus Christ need to think, act, and respond to this important topic.

The question is, "How?"

Early in my marriage, Theresa and I planned to have a getaway weekend. At the time, I was working several part-time jobs because we were very poor. And one of my bosses, who was quite

wealthy, found out about my plans. So right before we were going to leave, he tells me, "Hey, I have a little gift for you to really enjoy your time!"

Then he pulls up in a silver Nissan 280Z, which was one of the hottest sports cars at the time (I know, I'm dating myself with this!). He hands me the keys and says, "I want you and your wife to have a really good time."

My first thought was, "I'd better not wreck this car!"

My second thought was, "I probably should test this to make sure it's going to be okay for us." I couldn't wait to drive it! So I took it out and I punched that thing a few times. It was really fast!

Later, when Theresa and I were on our trip, I was feeling pretty cool up until I had to park it. I started to think, "What if another car's door hits it and dents it?"

Now, you might be thinking, "Ok, that's a nice story, Chip, but what does your boss's car have to do with the environment?"

I believe this is similar to how God thinks about the planet that He's entrusted to you and me.

The truth is the earth belongs to God.

Psalms 24:1-2 says, "*The earth is the*

Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it, for He founded it on the seas, He established it on the waters."

So, if God made the Earth, then it's spiritual. It's important. It matters.

Let me say it again: the environment really, really matters to God.

So what does this mean for us?

God is the greatest artist and the greatest architect. And one of the great ways we honor Him is to

respect what He has made. We study what He has made. And we give Him honor, and credit, and praise for the beauty and the provision that He's made for us.

We're also supposed to honor

God's creation because He made it. It's valuable, it's precious, it's irreplaceable, and it's sacred. It's not just a piece of land.

My boss gave me something precious and sacred that was for my pleasure, but I also felt a tremendous weight of responsibility to both enjoy it and not mess it up.

How much more do you think God expects us to take responsibility for the earth that He's entrusted to us?



February

2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					¹	² Solemnity of the Presentation – Holy Mass at 10am with Blessing of Candles
³ 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Holy Mass at 10:30am with Blessing of Throats. Lector: Joe Kaczynski. Breakfast and Annual Meeting	⁴	⁵	⁶	⁷	⁸	⁹
¹⁰ 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Larry Panfil and Claudia Bertasso	¹¹	¹²	¹³	¹⁴ Commemoration of St. Valentine	¹⁵	¹⁶ 66th Anniversary of the death of Ś+P Prime Bishop Franciszek Hodur. PNU District 10 Meeting, 10am at the Blessed Virgin Mary of Czestochowa parish
¹⁷ Septuagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 9:30 and 11:30am. Lectors: Marilyn Hietala and Claudia Bertasso	¹⁸ President's Day Holy Mass for Healing with Anointing at 6:15pm.	¹⁹	²⁰	²¹	²²	²³
²⁴ Sexagesima Sunday. Holy Mass at 11:30am ONLY. Lectors: Joe Kaczynski.	²⁵ Feast – St. Matthias (translated)	²⁶	²⁷	²⁸		

March Upcoming:

- Mar. 3: Quinquagesima Sunday. ONE Holy Mass at 10:30am. Parish Financial Meeting.
- March 6: Ash Wednesday. Holy Mass at 7pm.